

# Arthritis & Healthy Bones: What You Should Know



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*Arthritis and chronic joint symptoms affect  
nearly 70 million Americans, or about one of every three adults.*

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Women's bones need to stay strong as they get older. Unfortunately, millions of women experience limited mobility from arthritis. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States.

Building strong bones during childhood and adolescence is the best way to prevent weak bones, but no matter how old you are it's never too late to start!!

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## What Causes Arthritis:

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- **Age-** Age is one of the strongest risk factors associated with arthritis. In the United States alone, arthritis affects almost 80% of those 65 years of age and older.
- **Gender-** After age 45, arthritis is more common in women. Joints in women are more likely to be out of line than those in men.
- **Obesity-** Obese people are more likely to develop arthritis in the knees and other supporting joints.
- **Injury or overuse-** Repeated injury or overuse of a certain joint increases the risk of developing arthritis.

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## Frequently Asked Questions:

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### **Q- Who gets arthritis?**

**A-** Anyone can have arthritis. Men and women of all ages and even children can have arthritis. Some people are more likely than others to get arthritis. You are at greater risk for arthritis if you:

- Are older than 55
- Are overweight
- Have injured a joint
- Have family members who have arthritis

### **Q- I've been experiencing pain in my joints. Do I have arthritis? If so, what type?**

**A-** There are over 100 types of arthritis and only a doctor can determine if you have arthritis and what type. Early diagnosis and treatment are important to help slow or prevent damage to joints that can occur during the first few years for several types.

*Please see reverse*

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## Steps You Can Take for Healthy Bones and Keeping Active with Arthritis:

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- ***Be Physically Active:*** An active lifestyle can help decrease the risk of fractures and keep your joints flexible. It can improve your ability to do daily activities and improve your overall health and fitness. Aim to do weight-bearing activities like walking, dancing, climbing stairs, or using weights at the gym.
- ***Prevent Falls:*** Reduce your risk of falling by making your home safer. For example, use a rubber bath mat in the shower and tub. Keep your floors free from clutter.
- ***Get enough calcium and Vitamin D:*** Both are important for strong bones. Be sure to talk with your health care provider about calcium and Vitamin D in your diet.

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## Every Woman Matters Can Help Keep You Active:

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The Every Woman Matters Program can help you receive a free or low-cost women's health exam that includes educational opportunities related to changing and maintaining healthy behaviors such as being physically active and eating a healthy diet.

In addition to breast and cervical cancer screenings, any client ages 40 through 64 is eligible for a blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and diabetes screening. Clients screened for heart disease and diabetes are eligible to participate in activities for healthy living including those with an arthritis diagnosis or who are experiencing joint pain.

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## Additional Resources:

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Arthritis Foundation	<a href="http://www.arthritis.org">www.arthritis.org</a>
National Bone Health Campaign	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones">www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones</a>
National Women's Health Information Center	<a href="http://www.womenshealth.gov">www.womenshealth.gov</a>

### For More Information:

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Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4817  
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[www.hhss.ne.gov/womenshealth](http://www.hhss.ne.gov/womenshealth)